

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Iraq

SUBJECT Attitude of Political Parties Toward
Forthcoming Iraqi ElectionsPLACE
ACQUIRED

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Liberal, National Democratic and Independence Parties

1. It is reported that the Liberal and National Democratic Parties refused an offer of seats in the Iraqi Cabinet because no agreement could be reached over their demand for the removal of Mutasarrifs and other Ministry of Interior officials, who can exert a great deal of influence on the elections, which will be held at an unspecified date.
2. The Liberal and National Democratic Parties threaten to boycott the elections and will demonstrate against the way they are conducted.
3. If carried out, this threat of a boycott reportedly will widen the split between the two above-mentioned parties and the extreme rightist Independence Party which has been caused by: (a) the presence in the cabinet of Muhammad Mahdi Kubba, leader of the Independence Party; (b) the tendency of the cabinet to rely on the support of the Independence Party; and (c) the recent victory of leftist elements over the Independence Party at the Students' Union elections.
4. Since its split from the other parties, the Independence Party has emerged as the strongest group and is attempting to recapture the support of the students.
5. Subsequent to the aforementioned developments, Fa'iq Samarra, Secretary of the Independence Party, is reported to have stated that the Independence, Liberal and National Democratic Parties held a joint meeting on 15 March 1968 and adopted the following decisions: to cooperate during the forthcoming elections; to set up a joint elections committee; to have only one party candidate stand in any constituency; and not to recognize any illegal groups.

People's Party and National Unity Party

6. Aziz Sharif, leader of the banned People's Party, stated that that party has made no election plans.
7. 'Abd-al-Fattah Ibrahim stated that the National Unity Party would boycott the elections.

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